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Generation in transition: Youth transitions among native-born descendants of immigrants from Turkey

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Appendix II: Qualitative Fieldwork

1. Sampling and Fieldwork Visits

The qualitative fieldwork consisted of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with a sub-sample of the TIES Survey respondents. TIES respondents were asked whether they would accept being contacted again, and I obtained permission from NIDI in the Netherlands and INED in France to consult the list of the participants who had agreed to be re-contacted. 85% of the descendants of immigrants from Turkey living in Amsterdam and 73% of those in Strasbourg had been positive about being re-approached. .

1.1 Amsterdam Fieldwork

First Round

In Amsterdam, the majority of TIES respondents were sampled from peripheral neighborhoods surrounding to the east, west and north of the city center. Those are also the neighborhoods that concentrate the majority of immigrants from Turkey and their descendants. In order to initiate contact with respondents and schedule interviews, I had to visit their home addresses as registered at the time of the TIES survey, as, unlike for the Strasbourg respondents, their telephone numbers were not available.

I began my fieldwork visits in west Amsterdam, which is my local area. The fieldwork began in the spring of 2009 and continued for 3 months, focusing on the respondents residing in the west of the city. During these three months, I tried to contact as many respondents as possible between the ages of 20 to 30 with both parents from Turkey. My efforts resulted in 19 interviews with 11 male and 8 female respondents.

For the field visit, I prepared a letter describing the aims of the study and my contact details printed on official University of Amsterdam paper, in Dutch and Turkish. I posted these letters one week in advance to alert my respondents to my visit. I also carried these letters with me to the field visits in instances where I did not find the respondents at home, leaving them in the hope of being re-contacted.

I would first search for the addresses and try to match the surnames I had. I would mostly speak to respondents through the intercom or through the window or balcony. Speaking Turkish was useful as it was usually respondents' parents who answered the doors, and it was usually easier to make contact with respondents by establishing a relationship with their mothers. In some instances, mothers directly gave me respondents' mobile numbers, or told me

when they would be home, or called them while I was there to arrange an appointment. In some instances, mothers invited me into the house and this provided me with an opportunity to interview them as well as other family members. Fathers proved more difficult to approach as they had a more suspicious attitude and sometimes saw no use in what I was doing. In fact, there were instances where fathers intervened to prevent the mothers from providing the contact details.

The major issue was finding young people at the addresses, as most of the registers of the survey did not fit the actual addresses. Streets or building restorations in west Amsterdam meant some addresses had completely disappeared from the map. In one instance, I found a respondent who was living in the last building standing in the street. The second greatest problem was finding nobody home despite repeated visits.

Some respondents or their family members turned me down via the window or the intercom, which proved that trying to get face-to-face contact was a better way to persuade people. So I tried my best to persuade them to talk to me face to face, and, in those instances, I only received one rejection.

The strategy of leaving letters did lead to two respondents calling me back, or their fathers, since the letter targeted only the surname. However having read the letter also led others to turn me down when I visited their addresses.

All in all, catching people face to face, especially the respondents or their mothers, was the most productive way to get respondents in west Amsterdam. Interestingly, my field visits in east Amsterdam proved more productive, as I found more people at home and more open to participating in the study.

I took every opportunity to interview the parents or spend time with them, eating with them whenever I was offered. My discussions with parents during or after those meals proved valuable with regard to illuminating the transition pathways of my respondents. In fact, the parents were also very willing to talk about their own stories and their experiences of joblessness and homesickness for Turkey.

When respondents agreed to meet me, it was always they themselves who determined the interview location; sometimes we spoke in their homes, sometimes outside in a cafeteria, and, in some instances, in a park sitting on a bench—wherever they felt most comfortable. I was allowed to record the interview in the majority of the cases, though the interviews continued to yield very valuable information when the recorder was turned off. Some respondents felt more comfortable without the recorder, and this was necessary to make the interview environment more relaxed.

Second Round

One year later, I returned to continue fieldwork in Amsterdam. During the year, not only had I done a first round of interviews in Strasbourg, but had also found the time to review the profiles of my respondents and to decide on my approach with regards to my focus. In fact, I decided to capture as much diversity as possible in my interviews rather than focusing on one group of graduates or one category of transition outcome only. While the first fieldwork visit yielded 19 interviews, in the second fieldwork I aimed at increasing the number to 25. In the second round of interviews, I decided to do a more purposeful interview to capture a greater diversity of activity as well as a balance of education level or occupational activity. As the majority of my interviewees first time around were from vocational training groups, this time I interviewed more inactive women as well as more higher education graduates. I used information provided in the TIES data to purposefully select some of the respondents. I interviewed 4 female respondents and 2 male respondents in this round.

I also tried to re-contact with respondents from the first fieldwork to see how their careers had turned out and add a longitudinal element to the data. However, I could not locate one third of my respondents using the same mobile number or address. A further third were either busy, constantly postponing the interview, or didn't show up. Eventually, I was able to interview a group of six respondents again about how their transitions turned out since the last interview. I incorporated the findings of these interviews into the transition pathways of young people when re-organizing the typology. As in Strasbourg, the second round of Amsterdam interviews re-shaped my perspective on how much we can really capture about transitions using one-off interviews when they are constantly transforming. This is why I began to focus more and more on processes which feed into and lead on from each other, and found it increasingly difficult to speak about "outcomes".

1.2.Strasbourg Fieldwork*First Round*

In Strasbourg, I had access to the telephone numbers of the respondents rather than their addresses, since the TIES survey had been conducted by phone survey. I began my fieldwork in Strasbourg in the fall of 2009, and stayed in France for 3 months. Again, sampling my respondents from the TIES survey, I focused on the age group of 20 to 30 and my initial visits led to 13 interviews with 8 female and 5 male respondents.

I prepared a similar official letter, this time in French and Turkish, explaining the aims of the research and left the letter with respondents in case they wanted my contact details. In any case, I wasn't able to post these letters beforehand as I wasn't informed of respondents' addresses.

Since I was not able to establish face-to-face contact, I had to pursue a different strategy in Strasbourg when recruiting respondents. This time, I tried to get the respondents themselves (or at least their mothers) on the telephone, hoping that they would not turn me down if they listened to me themselves. Again, mothers turned to be more sympathetic to my aims and more open to providing their children's contact details.

While making phone calls was a less physically exhausting strategy, particularly in an unfamiliar city, unfortunately it also proved to be difficult in terms of recruiting respondents as it made it much easier for them to turn me down than if I had been with them in person. In addition, some phone numbers had changed or I couldn't find anybody at home. As a result, I pursued each and every contact until I reached someone or got rejected. In Strasbourg, I received a lot of direct rejections from respondents; sometimes, even after hearing what I was doing. Some young people weren't convinced of the value of what I was doing. With some unemployed young people, I almost had to beg for their participation, but couldn't get them to agree.

In Strasbourg too, I was hosted by families, mostly mothers, who had me over for dinner after the interviews. I again took every opportunity to talk to parents after my interviews. I also established quite close relations with my respondents, which were crucial for my second fieldwork visit in Strasbourg.

Second Round

In the spring of 2011, I returned to Strasbourg after having analyzed my data and concluded a second round of fieldwork in Amsterdam. Again, in this week, I pursued more purposeful sampling, focusing on the gaps that I had identified in my data—young people in higher education and male respondents—to balance the sample and to emphasize certain profiles and experiences. I conducted an additional 13 interviews but made use of only 12 of them, as it turned out that one of my respondents had been born in Turkey and had arrived in France at the age of 12.

Again, I also tried to re-contact my initial respondents and was successful in reaching five of them. The second round of interviews provided interesting information with regard to how the transitions of the respondents had evolved since the first interview, such as whether they got their promotion or found a job or even fired in some cases. Not only the experiences but also motivations and expectations of the young people transformed as a result of their experience during this period.

2. Interview Dynamics; Balance, Language and Background

The interview situation is an artificial setting for interaction to which both the interviewee and interviewer arrive loaded with various preconceptions about

each other and in which issues of power are dominant (Gheorghiu, 2011). As a result, my city of origin, my education level and even my looks (for example, my not wearing a headscarf) all had the potential to pigeonhole me in the eyes of the respondents.

When I started this research, I was very confident of my research topic. I believed that the real daily realities of these young people were issues of education and work, which were also in a way less private and less intrusive than talking about their religious or 'ethnic' identification. However, when I began my interviews, I realized while these issues of education and work were of great importance to the respondents, and they were often quite sensitive about talking about how their careers turned out, especially to someone highly educated. Especially in instances when my respondents started implying that I should know better than to ask since I am highly educated, I tried very hard to explain to them that they were the real experts about the French and Dutch system as I grew up in Turkey and also that their lived experiences were more ingenious and informed than many text books.

Language did not turn out to be an issue during the interviews. I left it to my respondents to decide on the language of the interview but the fact that I approached them in Turkish clearly motivated them to respond to interview questions in Turkish. All the respondents were proficient in Turkish, though they would often drift into French or Dutch, when using particular terminology, school names, institutions, or other expressions.

Finally, I stayed in touch with some of my respondents. Some of them invited me to their friend and family gatherings as well as weddings. These instances provided not only great insider information about their lives and families but also about how their transitions were evolving. Interestingly, one third of my respondents wanted to interact with me through social media (facebook). I was very happy that they were willing to give me (further) access to their private lives, and that I would be able to sustain my contact with them through this medium, observing how their transitions developed. In fact, I recently found out that one Strasbourg respondent with a BTS degree had been sent by her boss to New York for training. My only reservation was that respondents' gaining entry into my own private life could potentially damage our contact. A considerable group of my respondents are very religious and I worried about whether, say, a picture of me drinking would make them more reserved with me, or mean losing the opportunity to contact them again. In the course of time, some of these young people dropped out of my facebook contacts, though I can't be sure of the reason. However, to a certain extent, my fears seem to have been unfounded since I am still in touch with eight of them; five of them from Strasbourg and the other three in Amsterdam.

3. Profiles of the Qualitative Respondents from Amsterdam

#	Name	Age	Sex	Education	Parents	Activity	Transition Typology	Marital Status
1	Gülden	25	F	MBO N-4 Banking and Insurance	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working in a Turkish Corporate Bank (changed 1 job before worked for 3 years)	Stable	Married
2	Hakan	21	M	MBO N-4 Banking and Insurance	*1.5 gen. Mother, voc. edu. in NL, working as a bus driver *1st gen. Father (No information)	Last year student in MBO and working part-time as a taxi-driver	Still Studying	Single
3	Kuzey	24	M	MBO N-2 Security	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working as a security guard (1st Job working for 3 years)	Early Stable	Married
4	Tülin	25	F	MBO N-4 Health and Care	*Father came at 18, low edu., working as a taxi driver *1st gen. Mother, low edu, not working	Workings as a GP's assistant (1st Job working for 3 years, permanent contract)	Early Stable	Married
5	Gül	23	F	HBO (HAVO> HBO) In Business Economy	*1.5 gen. Father, voc edu. in NL, working as a driving instructor *1st gen. Mother, low edu, not working	HBO last year student and working part-time as a sales assistant	Still Studying	Single
6	Cemre	24	F	HBO (HAVO>HBO) In Accounting	*1.5 gen.Father, voc edu in NL entrepreneur (supermarket) * 1st gen. Mother, low educated, not working	Last year HBO student and working part-time in the finance department of a Bank	Still Studying	Engaged
7	Hamdi	28	M	PhD in Chemistry (VWO>UNI)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	3rd Year PhD and Working in Univesity	In-transition	Engaged
8	Serdar	27	M	MA in Finance and Auditing	*1.5 gen. Mother, low educated, working as a cleaner *1st gen. Father, low educated, working in the assembly line	DUAL study: Studying 1 day a week for MA in Finance and Audit and working 4 days a week in an Audit company (For three years, permanent working arrangement)	Early Stable	Single
9	Soner	23	M	MBO N-4 in Commerce (HBO> Drop out)	*1st gen. Father, low educated, entrepreneur *1st gen. Mother, low educated, not working	Last year student in MBO and working in an energy company part-time (2nd interview: finished MBO, tried HBO, dropped out, looking for a job)	In-transition	Single
10	Şakir	24	M	MBO> Dropped out (VMBO degree)	*Father came at 17, secondary edu.diploma, working *1st gen. Mother, low edu., not working	Working as a security guard for two years (before worked in the airport in baggage section also as a sales assistant)	Shifter	Engaged
11	Ercan	22	M	MBO N-4 in ICT (HBO> Drop out)	*1.5 gen. Mother, low edu., not working *Father 1st gen, low edu., not working	Recently left HBO and was working for a courier company full-time	In-transition	Single
12	Ufuk	23	M	MBO in Accountancy	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working in an accountancy company for two years (1st job)	Early Stable	Single
13	Zeynep	27	F	MBO> Drop out	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Unemployed for a year taking care of her baby (worked before as sales assistant) not looking for a job	Inactive	Married

	Name	Age	Sex	Education	Parents	Activity	Transition Typology	Marital Status
14	Sencer	26	M	MBO N-4 in Banking and Insurance	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working in an insurance company	Shifter	Married
15	Serkan	22	M	HBO in Business Economics (MBO> HBO)	*1.5 gen.Mother, voc edu. in NL *Father 1st gen., secondary edu. *Both mother and father are entrepreneurs (dry cleaning)	Studying in HBO and working part-time as gym instructor (Previous training MBO in Physical Education and Sports)	Still Studying	Single
16	Türkan	23	M	MBO N-4 in ICT (HBO> Drop out)	* 1.5 gen. Mother, low edu., not working * 1st gen. Father, low edu., not working	Working in an ICT company for two years (after MBO tried HBO, dropped out and found a job in the area of his study)	Early Stable	Single
17	Emre	25	M	MBO N-4 In Commerce (HBO> Drop out)	* 1.5 gen. Father, sick leave * 1st gen. Mother, worked as a Turkish teacher but recently laid off	At the moment of the interview he was unemployed but had various jobs and HBO trials in the last five years which did not last	Stagnant & Shifter	Single
18	Melék	23	F	HBO in Business Economics (VVO>HAVO> HBO)	- Both parents 1.5 gen. (from Germany), working as entrepreneurs (supermarket)	Only studying at the time of the interview	Still Studying	Single
19	Bulut	26	F	MBA degree (HAVO> HBO>UNI.)	Both parents 1.5 gen., voc edu. In NL,Father Working entrepreneur (company in trades and commerce)-Mother Not Working	Working in the finance department of a corporate company. She received a permanent contract in her first job.	Early Stable	Married
20	Nevin	25	F	MBO N-3 in Administration	- 1.5 gen. Father, low edu., working in a factory (machine operator)- 1st gen. Mother, low edu, working as sales worker	Working as a directors' assistant in a private company, this is her third job and she recently received a permanent contract	Stable	Married
21	Bade	23	F	HBO in Accountancy (HAVO>HBO)	*1st gen. Father, low edu.,working *1st gen. Mother, low edu., not working	Last year HBO student and working part-time in an Audit company	Still studying	Engaged
22	Melike	24	F	MBO > OUT	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Not working for 3 years before worked in cleaning and as sales worker – not seeking employment	Inactive	Married
23	Güney	27	M	MA (VVO>Uni.) Economics	*1st gen. Father, low edu.,working *1st gen. Mother, low edu., not working	Working in the finance department of a Multinational corporation (First job)	Early Stable	Married
24	Banu	30	F	HBO in Social Work (VVO>HBO)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	As a social worker in a non-governmental organization for 3 years (changed 2 full-time jobs before)	Stable	Married
25	Defne	27	F	VMBO>Out	*1.5 gen Mother, low edu, not working *1st gen Father, low edu, not working	Working Part-time in a Turkish Bank in Amsterdam (worked in cleaning, assembly lining and sales)	Shifter	Married

4. Profiles of the Qualitative Respondents from Strasbourg

	Name	Age	Sex	Education	Parents	Activity	Transition Typology	Marital Status
1	Can	27	M	Grands Ecole for Engineering in ICT (Bac scientific> Uni> GE)	* 1.5 gen Father arrived at 15, low educated, working in the assembly line * 1st gen Mother, low edu., not working	Working in an IT company in Paris for 3 years (1st job permanent contract)	Early Stable	Single
2	Furkan	24	M	BA in Business Economics (BAC general> Uni.)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Last year bachelors student and working part-time in Mcdonalds	Still Studying	Engaged
3	Ayla	25	F	BAC> Drop out	*Father 1.5 gen., low edu. Working in construction * 1st gen Mother, low edu, not working	Homemaker – Looking after kids	Inactive	Married
4	Selahattin	29	M	BEP in Construction	-Both 1st gen. parents Low Edu.-Not Working	Sick Leave & looking for a job (Worked initially as a street vendor, then in the assembly line in various factories, injured his back and on sick leave)	Shifter (/Stagnant)	Single
5	Cengiz	28	M	BEP in Plumbing (Bac tech> Drop out)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working on a flex contract for 3 years(Before worked as a courier, in the assembly line in two different factories)	Shifter	Married
6	Sebnem	30	F	BA in Sociology (BEP> Bac Pro.> University)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Maternal leave but working in a school as an adviser for a year (working in various schools as an advisor and a school counsellor)	Shifter	Married
7	Deniz	28	F	BTS in Administration (BEP> Bac pro.> BTS)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working as a director's assistant in a notary- (2nd job and got a permanent contract, first job in a school administration for four months)	Stable	Singel
8	Fatmagül,	23	F	BEP/ CAP> out	*1.5 gen. Mother, low edu., working, * 1st gen. Father, working in construction	Inactive since left school, looking for a job but never worked)	Inactive (stagnant)	Married
9	Zeynep	22	F	BTS in ICT (Bac tech> BTS)	*1.5 gen Father, voc. Edu. in France, entrepreneur (accountant) * 1st gen Mother, low edu., working	Working in the municipality, in her first job (found via internship)	Early Stable	Single
10	Engin	21	M	Bac Tech> Out	*1.5 gen Mother, voc edu. in FR, working * 1st gen Father, low edu., working	Works in a clothing store for 2 years	Early Stable	Single

	Name	Age	Sex	Education	Parents	Activity	Transition Typology	Marital Status
11	Veli	22	M	BA in Public Administration (Bac gen> Uni.)	*1.5 gen Father, voc. Edu. in France, entrepreneur in construction *1st gen Mother, low edu., not working	Studying in University	Still Studying	Single
12	Selin	23	F	BTS en Alternance- in Administration (BEP> Bac Pro. >BTS)	*1.5 gen Father, voc. Edu. in France, entrepreneur *1st gen Mother, low edu., not working	Working as an administrator in a Pharmaceutical Company (via BTS en Alternance)	Early Stable	Single
13	Gonul	24	F	BTS en Alternance-in Accountancy (Bac gen> Uni> Drop out> BTS)	*1.5 gen Father, voc. Edu. in France, entrepreneur in construction *1st gen Mother, secondary edu., not working	Working as an accountant in a company providing health service to elderly(via BTS en Alternance)	Early Stable	Single
14	Zeyniye	26	F	MA in Linguistics (Bac gen> Uni.)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Not working just graduated	In Transition	Married
15	Fahri	24	M	Bac Tech (BEP> Bac Tech)	*1.5 gen. Father, voc. Edu. in France, working.*1st gen. Mother, low edu., working	Studying to acquire his Bac (After getting his BEP, he accessed lyceum then dropped out and worked as a bus driver recently enrolled back into education)	Shifter (In Transition)	Single
16	Hulya	20	F	BEP> Drop out	*1st gen Father, low edu., entrepreneur *1st gen Mother, low edu.,not working	Dropped out of BEP, not working and caring for children (never worked before)	Inactive	Married
17	Sevgi	22	F	BTS in Notary Secretary (Bac gen> Uni> Drop out> BTS)	*1.5 gen Father, voc edu in France, entrepreneur *1st gen Mother, low edu., not working	Still Studing in BTS	Still Studying	Single
18	Ummuhan	23	F	BA in Economics	-1.5 gen. Father, working, voc. Edu. in France*-1st gen. Mother, low edu, not working	Still Studying	Still Studying	Engaged
19	Behzat	29	M	Bac Pro. (BEP> Bac Pro.> BTS> Drop out)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working longer than 3 years in a factory as a machine operator has a permanent contract (changed 3 jobs before)	Stable	Single
20	Ismail	29	M	CAP on Welding	*Both 1st generation parents (Father died when he was 4) *Low Educated *Not Working	Working as a street vendor for longer than 5 years (before worked in supermarkets as sales assistant and in the assembly line)	Stable	Married

	Name	Age	Sex	Education	Parents	Activity	Transition Typology	Marital Status
21	Ayse	30	F	BEP on Administration	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working part-time in the Administration of a factory for six months (changed 5 jobs before)	Shifter	Married
22	Mehmet	24	M	BTS as Technician (BEP> Bac Pro.> BTS)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Working in the assembly line for a year while looking for a job in the area of his study	In Transition	Engaged
23	Ahmet	22	M	BEP > Drop Out	*1st gen. Father, died recently *1st gen. Mother, low edu, working	Part-time job as a waiter while unemployed looking for a job	Shifter	Single
24	Kader	26	F	BEP (BEP> Bac Pro.> Drop out)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Worked in low skilled jobs (mostly cleaning and sales assistant) and now she is homemaker	Inactive	Married
25	Devrim	24	M	MA in Economics (Bac gen> University)	*Both 1st generation parents *Low Educated *Not Working	Still studying while doing small side jobs (via Interim)	Still Studying	Single